

REMARKS

I. Summary of Office Action

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sakura et al. U.S. Patent No. 4,214,587 (hereinafter "Sakura").

II. Applicants' Reply to the Rejection of Claim 1

The Office Action contends that Sakura discloses applicants' invention as recited by independent claim 1. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claim 1 is directed to a method of guiding hooks of an anastomotic connector into an aperture of a blood vessel. The hooks are configured to engage two blood vessels to form a fluid-tight connection between an opening in the sidewall of one of the two blood vessels and the other blood vessel.

Sakura shows an anastomosis device used to connect two blood vessels end-to-end. The device is "slipped around the end" of a first vessel and compressed by a snare loop. The end of a second vessel is then placed around the device and the everted end of the first vessel. The second vessel is then attached to the barbs of the device. The compression from the snare loop is released, allowing the device to expand, thereby connecting the ends of the two vessels. (See col. 4, line 55

through col. 5, line 12). FIG. 9 of Sakura clearly shows a cross-sectional view of two vessel ends 31 and 32 attached to each other by barbs 12.

Since Sakura's only embodiment is used to attach two vessels end-to-end, Sakura does not show or suggest the formation of a fluid-tight connection between an "opening in the sidewall" of one vessel and another vessel, as required by applicants' independent claim 1. Thus, Sakura fails to show each and every feature of applicants' independent claim 1. Applicants submit, therefore, that Sakura does not anticipate claim 1 and respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn.

III. Conclusion

The foregoing demonstrates that claim 1 is patentable. This application is therefore in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of this application are accordingly respectfully requested.

* * * Contingent Request For Telephonic Interview * * *

If for any reason the Examiner is unable to allow this application based on this Reply, applicants request a telephonic

interview with the Examiner. The undersigned attorney would appreciate a telephone call from the Examiner before the mailing of a further Office action.

Respectfully submitted,



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